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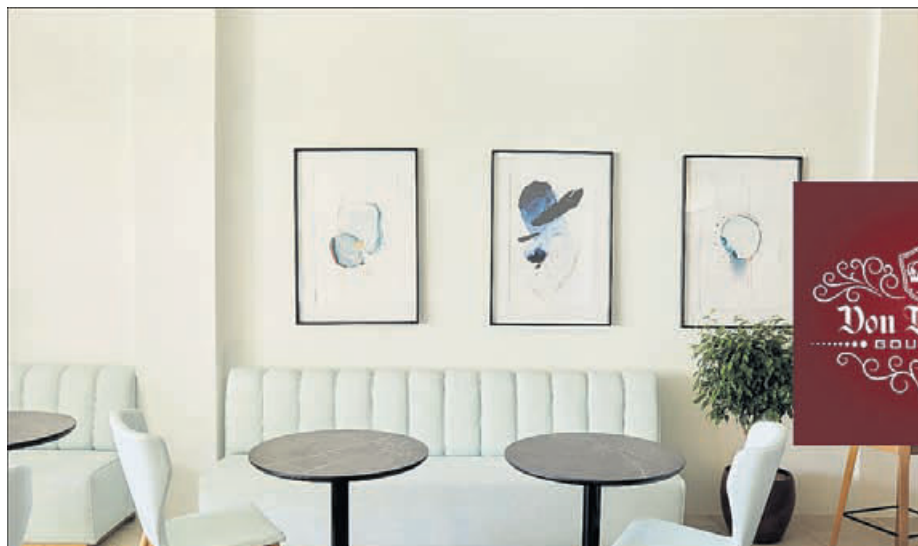
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Pipe bomb suspect told FBI he targeted US political parties because they were 'in charge,' memo says

By **ERIC TUCKER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The man accused of placing two pipe bombs in Washington on the eve of the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol told investigators after his arrest that he believed someone needed to "speak up" for people who believed the 2020 election was stolen and that he wanted to target the country's political parties because they were "in charge," prosecutors said Sunday.

The allegations were laid out in a Justice Department memo arguing that Brian J. Cole Jr., who was arrested earlier this month on charges of placing pipe bombs outside the headquarters of the Democratic and Re-



Dan Bongino, FBI deputy director, speaks during a news conference at the Department of Justice, Dec. 4, 2025, in Washington.

federal election is being tampered with, is being, you know, being — you know, relegated null and void, then, like, someone needs to speak up, right? Someone up top. You know, just to, just to at the very least calm things down."

He said "something just snapped" after "watching everything, just everything getting worse" and that he wanted to do something "to the parties" because "they were in charge," according to the Justice Department's memo. Prosecutors say when Cole was asked why he had placed the explosives at the RNC and DNC, he responded, "I really don't like either party at this point."

Cole was arrested on the morning of Dec. 4 at his Woodbridge, Virginia, house in what law enforcement officials described as a major breakthrough in their nearly five-year-old investigation. His lawyers will also have an opportunity to state their position on detention ahead of a hearing set for Tuesday in Washington's federal court. During a search of Cole's home and car after his arrest, prosecutors say, investigators found shopping bags of bomb-making components. He at first denied having manufactured or placed the pipe bombs, prosecutors say, and when pressed about his whereabouts on the evening of Jan. 5, 2021, initially told investigators he had driven by himself to attend a protest related to the 2020 election. "I didn't agree with what people were doing, like just telling half the country that they — that their — that they just need to ignore it. I didn't think that was a good idea, so I went to the protest," the memo quotes him as saying. But over the course of hours of questioning, prosecutors say, Cole acknowledged he went to Washington not for a protest but rather to place the bombs. He stowed the explosives in a shoebox in the back seat of his Nissan Sentra and placed one apiece outside the RNC and DNC headquarters, setting the timer on each for 60 minutes, the memo says. □

Associated Press

publican national committees, should remain locked up while the case moves forward.

The memo provides the most detailed government account of statements Cole is alleged to have made to investigators and points to evidence, including bomb-making components found at his home after his arrest, that officials say connects him to the act. The homemade bombs did not detonate and were discovered Jan. 6, the afternoon that rioters supporting President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol in an effort to halt the certification of his election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

Cole denied to investigators that his actions were connected to Congress or the events of Jan. 6, the memo says. But after initially disputing that he had any involvement in the pipe bombs, prosecutors say, he confessed to placing them outside the RNC and DNC and acknowledged feeling disillusioned by the 2020 election, fed up with both political parties and sympathetic to claims by Trump and some of his allies that the contest had been stolen.

According to the memo, he told agents who interviewed him that if people "feel that, you know, something as important as voting in the

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Trump says the U.S. 'hit' a facility along shore where he says alleged drug boats 'load up'

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and
WILL WEISSERT

Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) —

President Donald Trump has indicated that the U.S. has "hit" a dock facility along a shore as he wages a pressure campaign on Venezuela, but the U.S. offered few details.

Trump initially seemed to confirm a strike in what appeared to be an impromptu radio interview Friday, and when questioned Monday by reporters about "an explosion in Venezuela," he said the U.S. struck a facility where boats accused of carrying drugs "load up."

"There was a major explosion in the dock area where they load the boats up with drugs," Trump said as he met in Florida with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "They load the boats up with drugs, so we hit all the boats and now we hit the area. It's the implementation area. There's where they implement. And that is no longer around." It is part of an escalating effort to target what the Trump administration says are boats smuggling drugs bound for the



President Donald Trump attends a joint news conference with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy following a meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club, Sunday, Dec. 28, 2025, in Palm Beach, Fla.

United States. It moves closer to shore strikes that so far have been carried out by the military in international waters in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean.

Trump declined to say if the U.S. military or the CIA carried out the latest strike or where it occurred. He did not confirm it happened in

Venezuela.

"I know exactly who it was, but I don't want to say who it was. But you know it was along the shore," Trump said.

Trump first referenced the strike on Friday, when he called radio host John Catsimatidis during a program on WABC radio and discussed the U.S. strikes

on alleged drug-carrying boats. The attacks have killed at least 105 people in 29 known strikes since early September.

"I don't know if you read or saw, they have a big plant or a big facility where they send the, you know, where the ships come from," Trump said. "Two nights ago, we knocked that out.

So, we hit them very hard." Trump did not offer any additional details in the interview.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth or one of the U.S. military's social media accounts has in the past typically announced every boat strike in a post on X, but there has been no post of any strike on a facility.

The Pentagon on Monday referred questions to the White House, which did not immediately respond to a message seeking more details. The press office of Venezuela's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Trump's statement.

Trump for months has suggested he may conduct land strikes in South America, in Venezuela or possibly another country, and in recent weeks has been saying the U.S. would move beyond striking boats and would strike on land "soon." In October, Trump confirmed he had authorized the CIA to conduct covert operations in Venezuela. The agency did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment Monday. □

Associated Press

Homeland Security says a fraud investigation is underway in Minneapolis

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Federal Homeland Security officials were conducting a fraud investigation on Monday in Minneapolis, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said. The action comes after years of investigation that began with the \$300 million scheme at the non-profit Feeding Our Future, for which 57 defendants in Minnesota have been convicted. Prosecutors said the organization was at the center of the country's largest COVID-19-related fraud scam, when defendants exploited a state-run, federally funded program intended to provide food for children.

A federal prosecutor alleged earlier in December that half or more of the

roughly \$18 billion in federal funds that supported 14 programs in Minnesota since 2018 may have been stolen.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said then that fraud will not be tolerated and that his administration "will continue to work with federal partners to ensure fraud is stopped and fraudsters are caught."

Noem on Monday posted a video on the social platform X showing DHS officers going into an unidentified business and questioning the person working behind the counter. Noem said that officers were "conducting a massive investigation on childcare and other rampant fraud."

"The American people deserve answers on how their

taxpayer money is being used and ARRESTS when abuse is found," U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement posted.

The action comes a day after FBI Director Kash Patel said on X that the agency had "surged personnel and investigative resources to Minnesota to dismantle large-scale fraud schemes exploiting federal programs."

Patel said that previous fraud arrests in Minnesota were "just the tip of a very large iceberg."

President Donald Trump has criticized Walz's administration over the fraud cases to date.

In recent weeks, tensions have been high between state and federal enforcement in the area as the

Trump administration's immigration crackdown focused on the Somali community in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, which is the largest in the country.

Among those running

schemes to get funds for child nutrition, housing services and autism programs, 82 of the 92 defendants are Somali Americans, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for Minnesota. □



Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem appears before the House Committee on Homeland Security on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025.

Associated Press

2 New Jersey pilots killed in a helicopter collision frequented a cafe together near the crash site

By DAVE COLLINS
Associated Press

Two men who died after their helicopters collided midair in New Jersey over the weekend both earned their private pilot licenses over a decade ago and would often have breakfast together at a cafe near the crash site before taking to the skies from the local airport.

Authorities on Monday identified the two New Jersey men as Kenneth Kirsch, 65, and Michael Greenberg, 71. Witnesses told police that the two helicopters they were piloting Sunday were flying close together just before they crashed in a farm field near the airport in Hammonton, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) south-east of Philadelphia.

Hammonton Police Chief Kevin Friel said in a statement that Kirsch, of Carney's Point, was pronounced dead at an area hospital after being flown there, while Greenberg, of Sewell, died at the crash site.

Investigators with the National Transportation Safety Board were examining the accident site on Monday and determined the debris field is about 100 yards (91 meters) long and contains



Debris from a helicopter is shown after two helicopters crashed in Hammonton, N.J., on Sunday, Dec. 28, 2025.

parts of the main rotors and tail rotors, a spokesperson said. Both helicopters are expected to be removed from the site Tuesday and taken to another location for further review.

A preliminary report is expected in about 30 days, the NTSB said.

Friel said rescuers responded to a report of an aviation crash at about 11:25 a.m. Sunday. Video from the scene shows a helicopter spinning rapidly to the ground. Police and fire crews subsequently extinguished flames that engulfed one of the helicop-

ters. The Federal Aviation Administration described the crash as a midair collision between an Enstrom F-28A helicopter and Enstrom 280C helicopter near Hammonton Municipal Airport. Only the pilots were on board.

Kirsch and Greenberg both received their private pilot licenses in 2014, FAA records show. They often stopped at the Apron Cafe next to the airport for breakfast before flying, said the restaurant's owner, Sal Silipino.

Silipino said Kirsch and Greenberg ate at the cafe

shortly before the crash. Patrons watched the helicopters take off from the airport and were stunned when the aircraft fell from the sky, he said.

"It was shocking. Still shaking to see that happen," Silipino said. "They were just at our café having breakfast. They're regulars. They come in every week or every other week. They fly in together. They seem to be very nice people. They were also very kind to the workers and staff and all."

He said the helicopters' flights appeared to begin without incident.

"I saw one go down and then I saw the other one go down and there was little bit of disbelief. It's like, is that really happening?," Silipino said.

FAA records show Kirsch was the registered owner of one of the helicopters, while the other aircraft was registered to M&M Charter LLC of Mountville, Pennsylvania. Contact information for M&M Charter could not be immediately found Monday.

Hammonton resident Dan Dameshek told NBC10 that he was leaving a gym when he heard a loud snap and saw two helicopters spinning out of control.

"Immediately, the first helicopter went from right side up to upside down and started rapidly spinning, falling out of the air," Dameshek told the TV station. "And then it looked like the second helicopter was OK for a second, and then it sounded like another snap or something ... and then that helicopter started rapidly spinning out of the air."

Hammonton is a town of about 15,000 people located in Atlantic County in the southern part of New Jersey. □

Associated Press



In this photo provided by the office of Los Angeles City Councilmember Curren Price, Carlitos Ricardo Parias, left receives a certificate of recognition from Jose Ugarte, chief of staff for Los Angeles City Councilmember Curren Price in Los Angeles, Aug. 2025.

Associated Press

Judge dismisses criminal case against TikTok streamer held in immigration detention

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A federal judge has dismissed a criminal case against a popular Los Angeles TikTok streamer, citing constitutional violations after his lawyers were denied access to him while he was in immigration detention.

U.S. District Judge Fernando Olguin issued a ruling Saturday dismissing an indictment against Carlitos Ricardo Parias, who is known for documenting police and immigration enforcement activity online. Parias' rights were violated when federal authorities repeatedly failed to allow his criminal defense lawyers to visit or speak with him in immigration detention so he could prepare for trial this week, Olguin wrote, adding that the dismissal was with prejudice, which prevents the government from refiling the same charges against him again.

"In short, the government's failure to coor-

dinate the overlapping actions of its separate agencies while relentlessly pursuing Mr. Parias's criminal proceedings created a situation from which constitutional violations could and did occur," Olguin wrote. The U.S. Attorney's office in Los Angeles said in a statement that the agency is evaluating its options for appeal. "We strongly disagree with the court's version of the facts as well as its legal conclusions," the statement said.

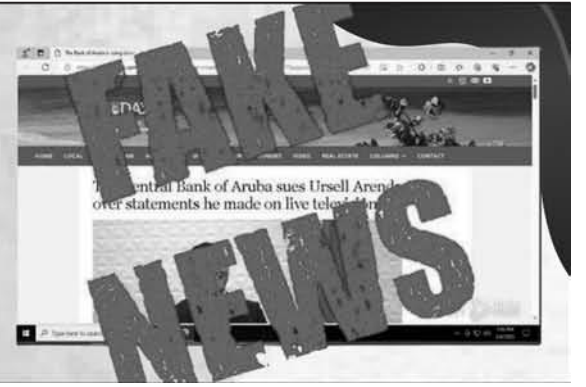
Parias was indicted last month and pleaded not guilty to charges of assault on a federal officer using a deadly or dangerous weapon and depredation of government property.

The charges stemmed from an October incident in which federal authorities said Parias rammed his vehicle into theirs while they tried to arrest him on an immigration warrant and shot him in the elbow. □

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U.S. pledges \$2 billion for U.N. humanitarian aid as Trump warns agencies must 'adapt or die'

By JAMEY KEATEN and MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The United States on Monday announced a \$2 billion pledge for U.N. humanitarian aid as President Donald Trump's administration slashes U.S. foreign assistance and warns United Nations agencies to "adapt, shrink or die" in a time of new financial realities.

The money is a small fraction of what the U.S. has contributed in the past but reflects what the administration believes is still a generous amount that will maintain America's status as the world's largest humanitarian donor.

"This new model will better share the burden of U.N. humanitarian work with other developed countries and will require the U.N. to cut bloat, remove duplication, and commit to powerful new impact, accountability and oversight mechanisms," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on social media.

The pledge creates an umbrella fund from which money will be doled out to agencies and priorities, a key part of U.S. demands for drastic changes across the U.N. that have alarmed many humanitarian workers and led to severe reductions in programs and services.

The \$2 billion is only a sliver of traditional U.S. humanitarian funding for U.N.-coordinated programs, which has run as high as \$17 billion annually in recent years, according to U.N. data. U.S. officials say only \$8 billion to \$10 billion of that has been in voluntary contributions. The United States also pays billions in annual dues related to its U.N. member-



A woman and her children, survivors of Sunday night's 6.0-magnitude earthquake, wait for assistance in the village of Wadir, Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2025.

Associated Press

ship.

"The piggy bank is not open to organizations that just want to return to the old system," Jeremy Lewin, the State Department official in charge of foreign assistance, said at a press conference Monday in Geneva. "President Trump has made clear that the system is dead."

The State Department said "individual U.N. agencies will need to adapt, shrink, or die." Critics say the Western aid cutbacks have been shortsighted, driven millions toward hunger, displacement or disease, and harmed U.S. soft power around the world.

A year of crisis in aid

The move caps a crisis year for many U.N. organizations, including its refugee, migration and food aid agencies. The Trump administration has already cut billions in U.S. foreign aid, prompting the agencies to slash spending, aid proj-

ects and thousands of jobs. Other traditional Western donors have reduced outlays, too.

The U.S. pledge for aid programs of the United Nations the world's top provider of humanitarian assistance and biggest recipient of U.S. humanitarian aid money takes shape in a preliminary deal with the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, run by Tom Fletcher, a former British diplomat and government official. Fletcher, who has spent the past year lobbying U.S. officials not to abandon U.N. funding altogether, appeared optimistic at the deal's signing in Geneva.

"It's a very, very significant landmark contribution. And a month ago, I would have anticipated the number would have been zero," he told reporters. "And so I think, before worrying about what we haven't got, I'd like to look at the

millions of people whose lives will be saved, whose lives will be better because of this contribution, and start there."

Even as the U.S. pulls back its aid contributions, needs have ballooned worldwide: Famine has been recorded this year in parts of conflict-ridden Sudan and Gaza, and floods, drought and natural disasters that many scientists attribute to climate change have taken many lives or driven thousands from their homes. The cuts will have major implications for U.N. affiliates like the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Program and refugee agency UNHCR. They have already received billions less from the U.S. this year than under annual allocations from the Biden administration or even during Trump's first term. Now, the idea is that Fletcher's office which has aimed to improve efficien-

cy will become a funnel for U.S. and other aid money that can be redirected to those agencies, rather than scattered U.S. contributions to a variety of individual appeals for aid.

Asked by reporters if the U.S. language of "adapt or die" worried him, Fletcher said, "If the choices are adapt or die, I choose adapt."

U.S. seeks aid consolidation

U.S. officials say the \$2 billion is just a first outlay to help fund OCHA's annual appeal for money. Fletcher, noting the upended aid landscape, already slashed the request this year. Other traditional U.N. donors like Britain, France, Germany and Japan have reduced aid allocations and sought reforms this year.

"This humanitarian reset at the United Nations should deliver more aid with fewer tax dollars providing more focused, results-driven assistance aligned with U.S. foreign policy," U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz said.

At its core, the changes will help establish pools of funding that can be directed either to specific crises or countries in need. A total of 17 countries will be initially targeted, including Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Syria and Ukraine.

Two of the world's most desperate countries, Afghanistan and Yemen, are not included, with U.S. officials citing aid diversion to the Taliban and Houthi rebels as concerns over restarting contributions.

Also not mentioned on the list are the Palestinian territories, which officials say will be covered by money stemming from Trump's as-yet-incomplete Gaza peace plan. □

Top diplomats of China, Cambodia and Thailand meet as Beijing seeks a stronger role in dispute

By KANIS LEUNG

Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Foreign ministers from Cambodia and Thailand convened with their Chinese counterpart on Monday as the Beijing government, building on its expanding presence in global diplomacy, sought to play a stronger mediating role in the violent border dispute between the two South-east Asian countries.

The trilateral meeting, held in a southwestern Chinese province north of the contested border, came two days after Thailand and Cambodia signed a fresh ceasefire agreement to end weeks of fighting that killed more than 100 people and forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands on both sides of the border. "We haven't resolved everything, but I think we are making progress in the right direction and we have to keep up the momentum," Thai Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow told reporters after the meeting in Yunnan province. He said chief priorities are to ensure a sustained ceasefire and continue rebuilding trust. It was noteworthy that the meeting was held in Yun-



In this photo released by Agence Kampuchea Press (AKP), Cambodia's Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn, left, Thai counterpart Sihasak Phuangketkeow, right, and Chinese counterpart Wang Yi pose for a photograph in Yunnan province, China, Monday, Dec. 29, 2025.

nan, nearer to the dispute and to Southeast Asia, rather than in Beijing, the Chinese capital and seat of government about 2,500 kilometers (1,300 miles) north-east.

The meetings represented China's latest efforts to strengthen its role as an international mediator and, in particular, its influence in Asian regional crises. As

China grows into an economic and political force globally, Beijing has spent the past decade and more working in various ways to increase its voice as a third party in diplomatic matters.

Hopes for peace expressed During the meeting Monday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called for joint efforts to promote regional peace, stability and devel-

opment language typical for China in such situations. "Allowing the flames of war to be reignited is absolutely not what the people of the two countries want and not what China, as your friend, wants to see. Therefore, we should resolutely look ahead and move forward," Wang said.

Cambodian Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn said he

believed the latest ceasefire would last and would create an environment for both nations to resume previously agreed-upon ways to settle differences, according to a Chinese interpreter.

"We don't want to return to the past, which means that no one wants to see this fighting happening again. Therefore, what is important is that this ceasefire is to be permanent and must be firmly respected and implemented," Prak Sokhonn said after the talks, speaking to Cambodian state media TVK. Sihasak also expressed hopes for peace with neighboring countries. After the meeting, Chinese official news agency Xinhua quoted Wang as saying the three nations reached a consensus to move forward with the ceasefire without reversal, maintain dialogue and restore ties between the two Southeast Asian countries step by step.

A statement released by Xinhua, the Cambodian state news agency Agence Kampuchea Presse and the Thai Foreign Ministry said the three sides had in-depth exchanges on maintaining the ceasefire. □

Hamas says its longtime spokesman was killed following an Israeli strike in August

By SALLY ABOU ALJOUD

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Hamas on Monday confirmed that its longtime spokesman was

killed following an Israeli strike in August in war-torn Gaza, the first time the Palestinian militant group publicly acknowledged the

death of one of its more prominent figures.

The confirmation comes months after Israel said on Aug. 31 that its forces had killed the militant group's spokesman Hudhayfa al-Kahlout, nicknamed "Abu Obeida," in an air-strike on Gaza. Hamas didn't say how he was killed or when.

The announcement came as U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are to meet in Florida on Monday as Washington seeks fresh momentum for the U.S.-brokered ceasefire in Gaza, which could be in danger of stalling ahead of a complicated, second phase.

Abu Obeida had been among the most recognizable figures of Hamas's armed wing, the Qassam Brigades, since the group seized control of Gaza in 2007 from the rival Palestinian group Fatah. He often delivered statements while masked, especially during major escalations, setting the tone for Hamas' threatening messaging and posture toward Israel. His visibility made him a familiar figure among Palestinians and across the region for nearly two decades. The Israeli military said he was key in Hamas' media and propaganda apparatus, saying the strike that killed him built on Israeli intelligence about his

whereabouts.

Hamas released a new video on the Telegram messaging channel Monday featuring the group's new spokesman, who said he was the new Abu Obeida and that he had inherited the nickname. The man, wearing a mask like his predecessor, did not give his actual name. But he indicated Hamas' refusal to disarm though the ceasefire deal calls for Hamas to surrender all of its weapons under supervision of international monitors.

"Our people are defending themselves and will not give up their weapons as long as the occupation remains," the spokesman said. □



A man sweeps a street next to a makeshift camp for displaced Palestinians in Gaza City, Monday, Dec. 29, 2025.

Associated Press

Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to find the anchor?

The anchor is a "must see" landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when you're visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean Sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the "T" junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the anchor

Size

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the "fluke" or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the anchor come from?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the

anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

"According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain."

Story 2:

"Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lifted another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them."

How did the anchor become a landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba; Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr., local businessman. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen

that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The "anchor", which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated "To All Seamen" on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the

origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr. died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated "To All Seamen" in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe

Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The best time to visit

When you're planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. □

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Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished



The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the island's past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed

and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches during breeding season? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying

her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic
This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic inverte-



brates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands).

The afore mentioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on

our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □

Dining in? Try making some local favorites!

How to make "pan bati"



(Oranjestad)—If you're ever up for an Aruban snack, try making another Aruban classic appetizer called Pan Bati. Similar to a pancake both in appearance and cooking, this is a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Ingredients:

2 cups of all purpose flour
1 cup grams of fine cornmeal
2 tbsp baking powder
1 1/3 cup of milk
1 pinch of salt
2 tbsp of granulated sugar
Oil for cooking

Instructions:

Add all the dry ingredients in a

bowl first, and stir until well mixed. Then add the milk and beat until reached a pancake-like consistency. If more moisture is needed, add some water until reached desired consistency.

In a hot pan with oil, pour in enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan. Just like pancakes, flip the pan bati when one side turns golden brown. When your pan bati is ready, place on a plate and cover with a clean kitchen towel.

Traditionally, pan bati is cut in triangle pieces, and is often eaten as a side dish with soup, fried fish or stews. However, it is also casually enjoyed with some butter and cheese on top! □

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Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill

(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the

Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □



Beaches for the whole family to enjoy!

(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when traveling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to traveling parents to list off some of the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one of Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of Pos Chiquito.

Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for

big and small families to set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.



Eagle Beach/Palm Beach

Yet another highly popular beach sites, Eagle Beach and Palm Beach is where most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for your children to play and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it may not be a very sandy beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals, even close to the shore. □



Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive



in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have

these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must

yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy

(hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located farther west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □



The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr.

Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Cura-

cao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no



different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these

processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Sources: Etnia Nativa

Place names in San Nicolas and their origins

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever taking a tour of Aruba, San Nicolas would definitely be on your itinerary. From relaxing on the white, sandy beaches of Baby and Roger's Beach, to exploring the prehistoric caves of Quadirikiri and Fontein, you are taking in a full view of what San Nicolas has to offer. But did you know that you are also passing through areas whose names have historical origins? Here are a few place names in San Nicolas and their origin story.

Sero Colorado

On your way to Baby or Roger's Beach, you'll pass by the famous Red Anchor at what was once the entrance to the Colony residential community and be greeted with red soiled hills by the coast. This is Sero Colorado. Named after the 30-meter, deep red, limestone hill, "Sero Colorado" translates to "Colored Hill". Sero Colorado has deep historical ties with the once-thriving phosphate industry in the area. Matter of fact, there are still underground shafts and passages deep in Sero Colorado from the time of phosphate mining. In 1958, the refinery at the time, Lago, adopted this name for the residential section of its employees.

Vader Piet

Another well visited area, Vader Piet is located in the Arikok National Park. Recognizable sites within this area include the Wind Mills and the Quadirikiri Cave. The origin of this name is part historical and speculation, as there are slight deviations from what actually happened.

In 1829, Pieter Lampe was a planter and the person responsible for governing this remote area. As the story goes, Pieter was well known and beloved for his kindness and good treatment of his employees, and was therefore also called Vader Piet (Father Piet). However, he was tragically murdered—some speculate at the hands of a slave. For his work and good heart, the area was named after him.

Nicolaas van der Biest was a successful landowner during the time of the phosphate boom in late 19th century Aruba. Back then, landowners (most, if not all of them men) were referred to as "Shon" by their subordinates. So, the district was originally named after Shon Nicolaas. Over time, the name evolved into what is now San Nicolas. □

Chanukah Light Shines Bright in Aruba



Chanukah in Aruba was marked this year with moments of joy, meaning, and unity that continue to resonate well beyond the holiday itself. The final night of Chanukah brought together locals and visitors for a powerful beachside celebration at the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort, led by Chabad Aruba.

As candles were lit and music filled the air, the evening carried a deeper message. The community paused to remember the victims of the Bondi Beach terror attack in Sydney, standing together in reflection while responding in the true spirit of Chanukah—by increasing light, strength, and unity.

The event was honored by the presence of the Prime Minister of Aruba, Mr. Mike Eman, whose attendance reflected the strong bond between Aruba's leadership and its Jewish community. Adding profound inspiration to the evening was Omer Shemtov, a recently released hostage, who shared words of courage and faith, recounting his miraculous survival of the horrific brutality of the Gaza tunnels. His message deeply moved the crowd and embodied the resilience and hope that Chanukah represents.

The celebration was further elevated by beautiful musical performances from entertainer Aaron Holder, transforming the beach into a space filled with hope, song, and togetherness.

The event was organized by Chabad Aruba under the leadership of Rabbi Ah-

ron and Chaya Blasberg, with the devoted support of Rabbi Levi and Mimi Bisk, along with the Chabad student rabbis.

Chabad Aruba extends heartfelt thanks to all those who made this evening possible—especially Mr. Rene Kan and the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort for graciously hosting the event.

We are also deeply grateful to our generous sponsors for their support:

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From darkness to light - though Chanukah has passed, its light continues to illuminate hearts across Aruba and beyond.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Highway
- 6 Like fresh brownies
- 11 Artist's stand
- 12 Mumbai's nation
- 13 Aspiration
- 14 Secluded valleys
- 15 Retained
- 17 Caribou's kin
- 18 Pie producers
- 22 Give off
- 23 Acropolis setting
- 27 Scout shelters
- 29 Bright parrot
- 30 One with a rod and reel
- 32 Face feature
- 33 Periodic table items
- 35 Shop tool
- 38 Ruler length
- 39 Suspect's story
- 41 Gown part
- 45 Misplaces
- 46 Pizzeria buy
- 47 Comb parts
- 48 Oman neighbor

DOWN

- 1 Warning color
- 2 Lifeboat need
- 3 Take advantage of
- 4 Kitchen whistler
- 5 Fudd of cartoons
- 6 College exam
- 7 Count start
- 8 Not busy
- 9 Window part
- 10 Chore
- 16 Sty resident
- 18 Second letter
- 19 Prayer ender
- 20 "I have a dream" speaker
- 21 Marine jellyfish
- 24 Bus. sch. course
- 25 Play group
- 26 Rams' mates
- 28 Out for number one
- 31 Old auto
- 34 Like forest rocks
- 35 Shaker stuff
- 36 Lotion additive
- 37 Prudent
- 40 Track act
- 42 Crater part
- 43 Casino card
- 44 Signing need

GRITS TERSE
LENIN ALOES
OSAKA PLANS
SCRIPT DIE
SUM SESSION
YES HALTER
COPAY
POPTOP LEB
REPASTS ALE
ODE SHAMES
PANEL OLIVE
ENTRY TENET
STORE SCANS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
			15		16			17	
18	19	20				21			
22				23		24	25	26	
27				28		29			
30				31		32			
			33		34				
35	36	37		38					
39			40		41	42	43	44	
45					46				
47					48				

1-9

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-9 CRYPTOQUOTE

R ERB XPUGSZU LZDLGPDT

PL HPNT, BSZ NDSX, DPJGU.

— LUTWT YRMUPD

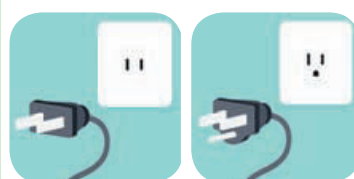
Cryptoquote: I ASK NOT FOR A LIGHTER BURDEN, BUT FOR BROADER SHOULDERS. — JEWISH PROVERB

Cruise ship Schedule: Dec. 25 - 31 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	25	SERENADE OF THE SEAS BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS NORWEGIAN DAWN	08.00 08.00 11.00	18.00 23.00 20.00	B C I	1 1 1
FRI	26	NORWEGIAN JEWEL CARIBBEAN PRINCESS ISLAND PRINCESS	07.00 09.00 09.00	20.00 22.00 18.00	B C I	1 1 1
SUN	28	MARELLA DISCOVERY CELEBRITY ASCENT FREEWINDS - Dept.	08.00 09.30 ****	20.00 23.00 22.30	B C E	1 1 -
MON	29	SEABOURN OVATION MARELLA DISCOVERY 2	08.00 08.00	22.00 20.00	B C	1 1
TUE	30	SERENADE OF THE SEAS NORWEGIAN SKY OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00 13.30 08.00	23.00 22.30 23.00	B C I	1 1 1
WED	31	BRITANNIA CARNIVAL VISTA EXPLORER OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	07.00 08.00 11.59 06.00	18.00 22.00 **** ****	B C I E	1 1 1 1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

5			1		2	7		
7				3	4	9	6	
	3	6						8
1	5		7	8			9	
		7					8	
	8	9						7
9		5		2	8			
8	7			9		4	5	
	2	1	5		7	8	3	9

Difficulty: ★★

12/30

Answer to previous puzzle

2	3	8	9	6	1	7	4	5
4	1	7	5	2	8	3	9	6
9	6	5	4	7	3	1	8	2
3	8	6	1	5	7	9	2	4
7	9	1	2	8	4	6	5	3
5	4	2	6	3	9	8	7	1
1	7	9	3	4	2	5	6	8
6	2	3	8	9	5	4	1	7
8	5	4	7	1	6	2	3	9

Difficulty: ★

12/29

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A man is silhouetted against the sky at sunset as he jogs in a park at the close of a hot summer day, Aug. 1, 2022, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

Trying to improve your health and wellness in 2026? Keep it simple

By DEVI SHASTRI
AP Health Writer

The new year is a time when many try to start new good habits and commit to improving health and wellness. But resolutions, lofty as they may be, can turn daunting quickly with all the advice and sometimes contradicting information coming at you from news reports, advertisers, influencers, friends and even politicians. But they don't have to be.

This year, The Associated Press got the downlow on all manner of health and wellness claims and fads. The good news is that the experts mostly say to keep it simple. As 2026 arrives, here's what you can skip, what you should pay attention to and how to get credible information when you are inevitably faced with more confusing claims next year.

Protein and fiber are important, but you probably don't need to pay more

When it comes to your diet, experts say most people can skip the upcharge. If you're eating enough, you're probably getting enough protein and don't need products that promise some big boost.

And it's true that most people could use more fiber in their diets. But, please, ditch the "fiber-maxxing" trend. Instead, eat whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains.

A good skin care routine is not expensive or complicated

That 20-step skin care routine and \$200 serum some TikTok sold you on? Dermatologists say you really don't need it. Stay away from the beef tallow and slather on a good sunscreen instead (yes, even if you have darker skin), they say.

And the same rule for simplicity applies to that hourlong "everything shower." The best showers are simple and short, dermatologists say, no "double cleansing" required.

There are many simple ways to get that workout in

If the gym and all its equipment feel intimidating, you can drop the illusion that a good workout requires either. This year, the comeback of calisthenics put the focus back on no frills, bodyweight workouts you can do in the comfort of home. Research shows calisthenics helps with muscle strength and aerobic conditioning. You may eventually need weightlifting or other equipment, but it is a great place to start to build consistency and confidence. □

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San Nicolas:
Centro Medico:Tel.584 5794

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



Chevy Chase is under the spotlight in a new documentary, warts and all and he's OK with it

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Insulting the director who is making a documentary about you might not be the most diplomatic of choices. Then again, Chevy Chase has never been very diplomatic. The comedian gets snarly at the top of filmmaker Marina Zenovich's "I'm Chevy Chase and You're Not," which airs Thursday on CNN. During their very first meeting, he warns her it isn't going to be easy to figure him out. She asks him why.

"You're not bright enough, how's that?" he replies. That the exchange made the film says a lot about Zenovich and also about Chase, a gifted physical comedian who starred in classic 1970s and '80s comedies like "Fletch," "Three Amigos," "Caddyshack" and the National Lampoon's "Vacation" franchise.



Chevy Chase attends the SNL50: The Homecoming Concert at Radio City Music Hall on Friday, Feb. 14, 2025, in New York.

"He's one of those people everybody thinks they know," says Zenovich. "He has a reputation that precedes him and there's something underneath that you want to get to. So it was a great challenge to try to get there."

A complicated man

"I'm Chevy Chase and You're Not" follows Chase's life and career, from his dark childhood to the dawn of "Saturday Night Live" and then Hollywood, ending with his messy time on the TV series "Community." There are perspectives offered from Dan Aykroyd, Beverly D'Angelo, Goldie Hawn, Lorne Michaels,

Ryan Reynolds, Martin Short, his wife Jayni Chase and three daughters, and brother Ned.

A portrait emerges of a sharp and often cutting comedian who has a deep fan base but can rub some people the wrong way with a blunt inelegance. "I'm complex and I'm deep and I can be hurt easily," he tells the filmmaker. The documentary shows footage of his film and TV work alongside home movies, cuddling a cat, playing a piano, playing chess, reading fan mail including a birthday card from Bill Clinton and visiting a flower shop.

The movie has the endorsement of a tough critic: Chase, himself. "It's just like a massage. I think of it that way: I love the massage. Sometimes it hurts, but the massage is so lovely," the comedian tells The Associated Press.

The key is childhood

Chase is just the latest profile by two-time Emmy-winner Zenovich, whose previous documentary subjects have included Roman Polanski, Richard Pryor, Robin Williams and Lance Armstrong.

"I make films about these complicated men," she says. "I'm just fascinated by humans and their behavior and Chevy just seems to fit in my oeuvre."

Zenovich points to Chase's early years to help explain how he became who he became. Chase, as a boy, was locked in the basement for days, hit across the face and shut in a closet as punishment at the hands of his stepfather and mother.

"I think the whole key to Chevy is his childhood. I hate to use the word trauma, but I think he's traumatized," she says. "Humor is his way of dealing with it." Chase famously feuded with many comedians, including "Community" co-star Joel McHale, "SNL" castmate John Belushi

and Bill Murray, who had replaced him at "SNL." He left "Community" following reports he'd used a racist slur and directed insults at co-star Donald Glover. He had also quarreled with the show's creator Dan Harmon, who was pushed out for a time.

"The old Chevy could make you laugh putting you down and there was a little bit of a wink there, so you were in on the joke," writer and actor Alan Zweibel says in the film. "Now it just comes off as mean." The film argues that Chase's darkness was amplified by his drug use. "In his mind he doesn't think he's mean," says Zenovich, who interviewed Chase twice and then followed him around for a few days.

"What was really interesting about Chevy is that he really wants to try to figure himself out. He wanted to go there, but then something stops him," she says. "He goes to a certain point, and then something stops him."

'Hollywood stuff'

Chase, now 82, says he's aware that there's a long list of people who consider him contemptible, but insists he doesn't care. "It's just Hollywood stuff," he says. "It never really bothered me."

The movie digs into his short-lived TV talk show and his eye-opening first and only season at "Saturday Night Live." He concedes leaving "SNL" was a mistake and shows how hurt he was not to be invited onstage when the show celebrated its 50th anniversary earlier this year. The documentary also shows him basking in the applause of fans as he attends a recent screening of "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" and it also reveals that his three daughters are insightful, funny and sweet.

"I think the one thing he really did was he was able to break that generational trauma," says Zenovich. "There I go again, using the word. But that's quite a feat, right?" □



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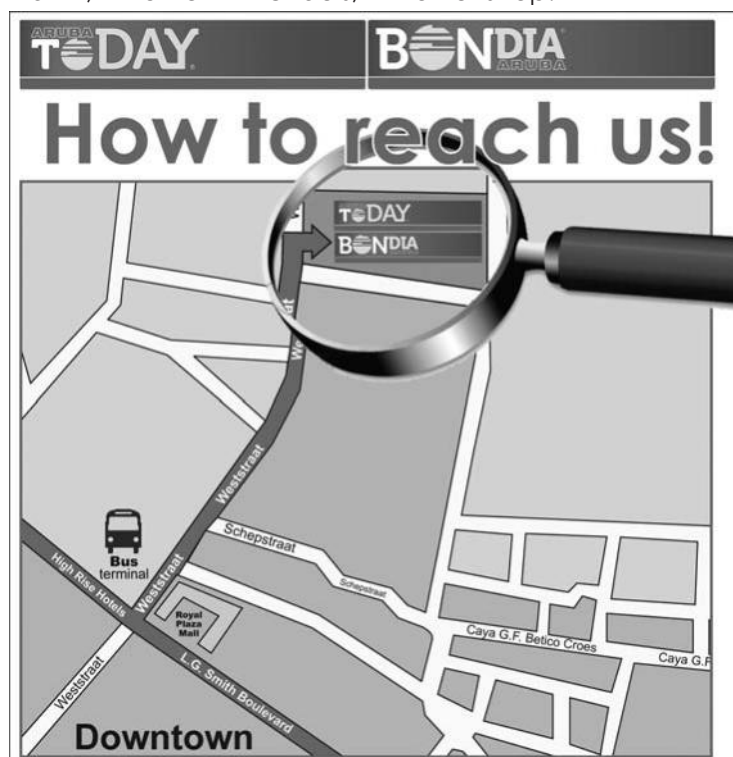
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Tiger Woods turns 50. It's the one time golf's greats can relate to him

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

Talk to any golfer who played against Tiger Woods and there is sure to be at least one story about one shot so sublime they were certain it could not be hit by them or anyone else.

He was just different. Better. The 2-iron Woods hit into the par-5 10th hole at the TPC Sugarloaf led Stewart Cink to say, "This is a skill set I don't have." Pádraig Harrington once saw Woods hit an 8-iron so majestic at Firestone that it got in his head and led to the Irishman making triple bogey.

Nick Price played the opening two rounds with Woods at St. Andrews in the 2000 British Open and felt the tournament already was over. Mark O'Meara played a practice round with him at Pebble Beach before the 2000 U.S. Open and told his wife before the championship started, "Tiger is going to win. And not only is he going to win, he's going to blow away the field." Woods won by 15.

For all those years, so many greats in the game could never relate to Woods. And now, finally, they can.

Not even Woods can beat time. He turns 50 on Tuesday. It's a milestone for anyone, but it's different in golf because the sport can be played well after the age when athletes have long retired in other sports. Phil Mickelson won a major at 50. Jack Nicklaus made an early Sunday charge at the Masters when he was 58.

With Woods, it's complicated.

He now is eligible for the 50-and-older PGA Tour Champions. He also has had more surgeries than the 15 majors he won. This is the first year he didn't play a single tournament, the result of a ruptured Achilles tendon in



Tiger Woods reacts as he wins the Masters golf tournament, Sunday, April 14, 2019, in Augusta, Ga. Associated Press

March and a seventh back surgery in September.

"I'm probably going to play 25 events on both tours and I think that should cover most of the year, right?" Woods quipped in the Bahamas when asked about turning 50.

He won the U.S. Open just eight days before reconstructive surgery on his left knee. He won the Masters two years after surgery to fuse his lower back. But he hasn't been the same since that 2021 car crash in Los Angeles. Woods has played 11 times the last five seasons, finished only four of those tournaments and hasn't been closer than 16 shots to the winner.

"Come back to what point?" Woods said. "I'd like to come back to just playing golf again."

And so this celebration is more about looking back than forward.

Ernie Els was most prescient in 2000 at Kapalua when he was on the losing end again no one finished second to Woods more than the Big

Easy. They matched eagles on the 18th in regulation, birdies on the 18th in a play-off and Woods got him with a 40-foot birdie putt on the second extra hole. Vintage Tiger.

"I think he's a legend in the making," Els said that day.

"He's 24. He's probably going to be bigger than Elvis when he gets into his 40s."

That's up for debate, of course. Undeniable is the impact Woods has left on golf. Popularity soared and prize money skyrocketed. Woods made golf look different and he made it cool. And perhaps his greatest legacy is he unwittingly trained a generation of players who wanted to be like him. Scottie Scheffler said nothing inspired him more than watching the intensity of Woods when he was out of contention at the 2020 Masters. Woods made a 10 on the 12th hole and followed with five birdies over his last six holes. He tied for 38th.

"Tiger was just different in the way he approached each shot. It was like the last shot

he was ever going to hit," Scheffler said. It was the only time they played together. Scheffler now is coming up on three years at No. 1 in the world, the longest stretch since Woods.

But it started with that skill set unlike any other.

"He's the only guy I've ever known who continually exceeded expectations," Tom Lehman said. "No matter how much you heaped on him, he found a way to exceed them."

Lehman recalls one moment at the Memorial on the 17th hole, a green so rock-hard it felt impossible to get it close. Lehman hit 5-iron as high and far as he could and was pleased to see it roll out 25 feet from the cup.

"He hits this shot way up in the air and it was coming down like a parachute," Lehman said. "Lands by the cup and bounces 2 feet and stops. I figure he must have hit a 7-iron. I said, 'Tiger, what club was that?' He said, 'That was a little, three-finger 5-iron.' He just filleted it in there."

"When I think of him, that's

what I think of. Only one guy could hit that shot. And he did it often."

Woods had the career Grand Slam at age 24, the youngest of anyone. He had 50 wins worldwide and 10 majors before he turned 30. It wasn't as easy as he could make it look. The late Dan Jenkins once said when Woods was in peak form, "Only two things can stop Tiger injury or a bad marriage." Turns out it was both. His path was derailed at the end of 2009 by revelations of multiple extramarital affairs, and the injuries kept piling up. He still made it back to No. 1 in the world in 2013 and he ran his PGA Tour victory count to 82, tied with Sam Snead.

"If he never got injured, he'd have 25 majors and 125 wins," Fred Couples said. Matt Kuchar saw it differently. He felt the injuries contributed to the legend of Woods, particularly that 2008 U.S. Open win at Torrey Pines. Woods was playing that week on shredded ligaments in his left knee and two stress fractures in his left leg. Often overlooked is that Woods had not walked 18 holes since the Masters until the opening round at Torrey Pines.

"The legacy is bigger because of the injuries," Kuchar said. "What he did at Torrey Pines, what he did at the (2019) Masters is sort of Hoganesque. At some point I, like most everybody, counted him out. And then he wins again."

Woods is keeping plenty busy outside the ropes. He was appointed to the PGA Tour policy board without a term limit in 2023 as the tour was in the midst of its battle with Saudi-funded LIV Golf. He now heads up the Future Competition Committee charged with reshaping the tour model. □

Texans defy odds to reach playoffs after 0-3 start, extend winning streak to eight games

By KRISTIE RIEKEN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Texans became the fifth team since 1990 to reach the playoffs after opening the season 0-3 and the first team to do it twice with their win over the Los Angeles Chargers on Saturday.

The Texans (11-5) extended their winning streak to eight games with the 20-16 victory to join their 2018 team, the 1992 Chargers, 1995 Lions, and 1998 Bills as the only teams since 1990 to lose their first three games and advance to the playoffs.

It's Houston's third straight trip to the playoffs, which is a franchise record and coach DeMeco Ryans and quarterback C.J. Stroud are the fourth coach/QB duo in NFL history to advance to the postseason in each of their first three seasons.

Their current position is one that seemed farfetched on Nov. 9 when they were 3-5 and trailed the Jaguars by 19 points entering the fourth quarter while playing without Stroud, who was sidelined recovering from a



Houston Texans wide receiver Jayden Higgins (81) runs to score a touchdown during the first half of an NFL football game against the Los Angeles Chargers Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025, in Inglewood, Calif.

concussion.

Instead of packing it in, the Texans rallied for a 36-29 victory that day to start their winning streak in a game Ryans called "the turning point for our entire season." "For us to be down as far as we were in that game and to have our backup Davis

Mills to have such a clutch performance to get us into a position to win that game. I feel like that's the game that flipped our season," Ryans said. "And it just showed us that no matter what we're up against, no matter who's on the field, if we stay together, stay connected, we

can overcome anything." On Saturday, Stroud gave Houston a huge early lead when he threw a 75-yard TD pass to rookie Jayden Higgins on the team's first drive before connecting with fellow rookie Jaylin Noel for a 43-yard score on the second one. "Both rookies stepping up, making extremely big plays for us to really give us that fast start, get us going with some excellent momentum," Ryans said. "Those really were two plays that helped us to be in the position we were in." Stroud is thrilled to be heading to the playoffs again and appreciates this trip even more because of the rough start.

"It wasn't great at first, but as we kept going, I think for me, my gratitude was going to another level because technically we weren't supposed to be here," he said.

What's working

Stroud got things going on Saturday, but it was the top-ranked defense that again secured the win. The Texans lead the NFL in points (16.6) and yards (272.4) allowed per game. They're giving up 177.6 yards passing and 94.8 yards rushing per game to make them the second team in the past five seasons to allow fewer than 200 yards passing and fewer than 100 yards rushing per game. The Texans sacked Justin Herbert

five times Saturday for their third game this season with at least five sacks. That's tied for second most such games in franchise history.

Azeez Al-Shaair stopped the Chargers from scoring in the second quarter when he grabbed an interception at the 1-yard line. It was Houston's 18th interception this season, which ranks fourth in the NFL.

What needs help

Stroud will need to take better care of the ball as the playoffs approach after he threw two interceptions in the second quarter Saturday. It was the first time he'd thrown two interceptions in a game this season since a Week 3 loss to Jacksonville where he was also picked off twice.

Stock up

DE Derek Barnett had two sacks Saturday for his fourth career game with at least two sacks and the first since 2020. Barnett, who has been getting more playing time in recent weeks because of injuries, also had two quarterback hits against the Chargers.

Stock down

RB Nick Chubb, who opened the season as the team's starter with Joe Mixon out, gained just 1 yard on his only carry Saturday. The eight-year veteran has rushed for just 37 yards combined in his past three games as the Texans have used former practice squad player Jawhar Jordan to back up Woody Marks. Injuries OTs Trent Brown (knee) and Aireontae Ersery (thumb) missed Saturday's game with injuries but could return this week.

Key stats

Stroud, the second overall pick in the 2023 draft, got his 27th career win Saturday to pass Peyton Manning (26) and tie John Elway for second-most wins by a quarterback selected first or second overall through their first three seasons in the Super Bowl era.

Stroud joined Drew Brees and J.P. Losman as the only players since 2000 to have touchdown passes of at least 40 yards on both of their team's first two drives. □

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